round him, he looked extremely comfortable and well-protected. Next, a piece of wide cloth was threaded by its hem on a rod fastened along the side of the cradle, and passed several times over his tummy and under the wooden cot, being finally lashed to the ridge pole. If the cradle had then been knocked over or rolled down hill baby could neither fall out nor get bumped. Finally a thick blanket was thrown over like a tent, and he was safe from dust or smoke or flies—or fresh air. Mother gave a few gentle rocks and he settled into sleep.

The use of the cradle in Hunza is said to be relatively recent, and the pattern of it, wherever it was introduced from, includes the prescription that it shall be made from a special sort of hard wood that grows wild on certain mountain spots and is supposed to possess magical properties. The ridge-pole forms a convenient carrying handle, and wherever you see a group of women working and chatting together, spinning in the shade or on the roof, beating out new-washed wool on a sandy patch beside a stream, pounding kernels, washing clothes, or busy on the threshing floor, you will usually see a cradle or two beside them. Truby King might disapprove of so much infant seclusion; but the flat roof offers a drop of 12 or 14 feet on to boulders, and even the living-room a gentle roll into the open hearth, so that Hunza is no place for crawlers. By the time baby is ripe for toddling, he is old enough to be entrusted to the next-older children, who take him pick-a-back or on their shoulders, scaling walls and leaping streams with him as sure-footed as young goats, and as fearless. They carry him to some flat spot and guard him with the most scrupulous care and proudly watch over his first steps.

Babies in Hunza are spaced at intervals of three and four years, so no mother is worn out with child-bearing or embarrassed in her daily work by ex-babies clinging to her skirts and jealous of the infant in her arms. Banu, for instance, was four, sturdy and ripe for independence, before Faqér came to claim the family's attention. Soon after his arrival we used to see her stalking about, proudly taking her first walks alone, and obviously savouring the new freedom from older supervision. One day she had passed twice or three times up and

down on the far side of our Dála. It had gently sloping banks where it passed our door, and was both narrow and shallow, having been divided a mile or so away to give Aliábád the "Middle Channel" that ran 30 or 40 feet above our level and watered the fields between. She looked long at it and pondered. She wanted to come over, but had always before leaped the little stream on Naját's or Derwish's back. Presently she made her decision and her first jump and fell spread-eagled into 18 inches or so of water. She gave a cry, wholly of vexation, not at all of fright, and scrambled safely out. Someone ran up laughing, took off her little shift and spread it for her in the sun to dry. She played about cheerfully on a sunny patch of sand till it was ready, and later we saw her jumping triumphantly to and fro, again and yet again, as if she could never jump enough. By the time Faqér emerges from his cradle she will be leaping the Dála with him astride her back.

Our very first girl friend, Kaníza of No. 3, has a younger sister, Gúlo, a sporting little imp, who had just cut her second teeth. One day she had a difference of opinion with her family, and we met her striding away from home. "Where are you off to?" "I'm annoyed," she said. "I'm going to mother's folk in Báltít," and off she set on a solitary four-mile mountain walk and a climb of hundreds of feet to her grandparents' home. No one tried to call her back or reason with her. She was wisely left to work off her waywardness her own way. She must have tramped home again the same day, for on the morrow we saw her happily busy with her own people again. After that our usual greeting to her was: "Hullo, Gúlo, off to Báltít?" "Not to-day!" she would say with a mischievous twinkle in her eye. Thus the Hunza youngsters learn independence.

The only drawback—from my point of view—about the sheltered life of the Hunza infants, was that when they were out for a walk in someone's arms, they were distinctly world-shy and were apt to set up a howl if I approached too near. The three-year olds were seldom frightened—though you must remember that a pale-faced woman with horrible blue eyes ("cat's eyes" they call them amongst themselves), and an

2: Lorimer T-3 (1925-4; 1934-5) 1939 AV7 Burusho AV7

866 outrageous hat, must be a terrifying sight when it advances on you for the first time—but I learned cautiously to admire the babies from afar, though the father or mother always wanted to show them off. Only little Faqér, initiated so young, was always unafraid, and would stretch out his little hands and gurgle at me and let me take him in my arms or tickle him.

123 866 Soni, of the next house to Bibi Gímo's (I had to call it No. 1A, because in my first notes I had confused the two households) had a little girl Afrots—quite the ugliest and brightest atom of three years old in Hunza. She had cried the first day on seeing me but immediately made friends, and ever after if I were sighted would run up to me and put out an abnormally grubby little paw and say "How do you do?" in imitation English fashion. On general principles we resisted all temptation to teach the children English ways or words or tales. This was almost my one lapse from grace, but Afrots was by general consent a special case, and her old grandfather, Aliko, was extraordinarily proud when he was witness to our meetings.

123 535 562 273 In the very first days of romping with the children of No. 1 and 1A on the threshing floor I had—stupidly—thought it might be fun to teach Shamúli, Bano, and Afrots to dance. So I stood up and started on a Highland schottische, and endeavoured, with little success, to coax them to join in. I was puzzled by something a little frigid in the air and soon gave up the attempt. When I climbed home for breakfast Dádo gravely and kindly said: "Excuse me, Mother, but Hunza women do not dance. It is thought unseemly." I thanked him for the warning; I wasn't sure whether the fear was that I should corrupt the girls or merely make an unseemly exhibition of myself. Either danger was to be avoided, so that began and ended my dancing lessons. Later Qudrat Ullah explained that in the olden days, when the Hunzukuts distilled a powerful *araq* from their mulberries, men and women used to dance together in drunken orgies that had untoward consequences. The Mir had long since forbidden the spirit, which provoked quarrels as well as dances, and "mixed dancing" fell under the same ban. This was the only man-made restriction on woman's freedom that I encountered in Hunza, and it did not seem to worry anyone.